

## Justice at War: the Inside Story of the Japanese American Internment

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### Book Notices

*Justice at War: The Inside Story of the Japanese American Internment*, by Peter Irons. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983. xvi, 407 pp. Notes, index. \$18.95 cloth, \$9.95 paper.

On December 7, 1941, the United States and Japan went to war, and in the spring of 1942, 110,000 West Coast Japanese Americans—two-thirds of them U.S. citizens—went to prison camps in remote areas of the West. The story of the World War II incarceration of an entire ethnic group, on the sole ground of shared ancestry with one of America's enemies, has been told many times and well. Peter Irons did not tell much that is new about Japanese Americans and their World War II experiences in *Justice At War*. Instead, he wrote of "a legal scandal without precedent in the history of American law. . . . a deliberate campaign [by government lawyers] to present tainted records to the Supreme Court" (viii). Four young Japanese Americans challenged their people's imprisonment by staying home when they were ordered to enter prison camps. The Justice Department prosecuted them, citing War Department statements that Japanese Americans presented a clear and present danger to West Coast defenses, and the Supreme Court sent them to jail.

In 1981, Irons used a Freedom of Information Act request to uncover Justice Department documents that revealed government lawyers suppressing evidence that would have cleared the Japanese Americans of any accusations of subversion, and handing the Supreme Court documents they knew to contain lies. Irons's vivid tale poses the dilemma faced by lawyers caught between loyalty to their government and to the ethical canons of their trade. But Irons went further than that. Armed with this information, he became part of a team of lawyers who succeeded in overturning the conviction of Fred Korematsu, one of the four defendants (two other cases have been reopened), winning vindication for the Japanese American people more than forty years after the fact.

BETHEL COLLEGE

PAUL SPICKARD

*The Indian Man: A Biography of James Mooney*, by L. G. Moses. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984. xvii, 293 pp. Notes, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$24.95 cloth.

In simple prose, L. G. Moses recreated James Mooney's life, work, and publications in *The Indian Man*. One of the first late-nineteenth-century ethnologists employed by the Bureau of American Ethnology, Mooney, a self-trained ethnologist, studied Native American cultural

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